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T.D. Alexander

The contribution of Mitchell Dahood to the study of the Psalter needs little introduction. His comparison of the Biblical Psalms with the Ugartic texts discovered at Ras Shamra in north Syria has resulted in a wealth of possible new interpretations, and as W.F. Albright has remarked,

Even if only a third of his new interpretations of the Psalter are correct in principle - and I should put the total proportion higher - he has contributed more than all other scholars together, over the past two thousand years, to the elucidation of the Psalter.¹

When, however, Dahood suggested in Psalms I, (1965) that, 'perhaps the most significant contribution to biblical theology that flows from the translations based on the new philological principles concerns the subject of resurrection and immortality,'² he not only dramatically highlighted the distinctive nature of his own approach but he also radically challenged the consensus of several generations of biblical scholars who had maintained that there was not a single reference to resurrection in the entire Psalter. By reinterpreting various passages in the Psalms in the light of the Ugaritic texts, Dahood concluded that the treatment of the topics of resurrection and immortality was in need of 'drastic revision'. The earlier opinion of Sigmund Mowinckel, that 'Neither Israel nor early Judaism knew of a faith in any resurrection, nor is such a faith represented in the psalms'³ could no longer, in Dahood's words, 'survive serious scrutiny'.⁴

The boldness of Dahood's claim, however, has been matched equally by the denials of his critics. Reviewing Psalms I, D.A. Robertson commented,

The wisdom of presenting this book to the general public must be seriously questioned. Dahood comes up with some really wild interpretations, many of which concern very important theological matters (like the question of what extent the concept of

immortality is present in the Psalter)...⁵
For Robertson, Dahood failed to distinguish adequately between what was philologically possible and what was philologically probable.

In Psalms III (1970), however, Dahood responded to such criticisms by offering evidence to support his claim that the concept of resurrection was already known when the psalms were penned.⁶ With reference to various passages in the Book of Proverbs (14:32; 16:2; 15:24) and the use of particular words (e.g., hayyim 'life' or 'eternal life'; aharit 'future' or 'future life'; nahad 'to lead'; qis 'to arise'; laqah 'to assume') he argued that the presence of the concept of resurrection in the Psalms need not be ruled out on theological grounds.

Dahood's renewed efforts to justify his earlier conclusions once again provoked opposition. In a detailed response Bruce Vawter suggested that Dahood had failed to give sufficient consideration to the development of theological ideas within Israel and Judah.⁷ He argued that although Dahood's new interpretations may be feasible, philologically speaking, they must ultimately be rejected on the grounds of being theologically impossible.

From these introductory comments it is clear that this topic raises important questions concerning the relationship between philology and theology. Unfortunately, however, this whole issue has become trapped in a complex of circular arguments. On the one hand, Dahood argues in the light of his philological studies that the concept of resurrection is considerably earlier than had hitherto been supposed. On the other hand, Vawter, for example, argues that because the idea of resurrection is late, Dahood's interpretation of the philological evidence must be seriously questioned.

In an attempt to break out of this circle it seemed best to isolate and examine in detail those psalms in which the topic of death is a significant element. One would expect that these psalms should provide the best evidence

as to whether or not the concept of resurrection is present in the Psalter. This was achieved by taking initially a number of key words related to death (i.e., the nouns qeber 'grave', mawet 'death', shahat 'destruction', 'apar 'dust', bor 'pit', she'ol 'netherworld', dumah 'silence', 'abbaddon 'destruction', and the verb mut 'to die'), and noting their distribution throughout the Psalter. As a result, forty-three psalms were found to contain at least one of these terms.⁸ It was, however, possible to reduce further this group of psalms. In a number of passages the terms 'apar and bor were observed to be quite unconnected to the subject of death (e.g., Ps. 40:3, 'He lifted me out of the slimy pit /bor/'; 72:9, 'The desert tribes will bow before him and his enemies will lick the dust /apar/'). Consequently some of the psalms were deemed to contain no specific reference to death at all (i.e., Pss. 35, 40, 72, 102 and 113). Further, in various other psalms there was all but the briefest of reference to death (e.g., Ps. 105:29, 'causing fish to die'). As a result it was possible to exclude from further consideration another twelve psalms (i.e., Pss. 5; 33; 37; 68; 78; 82; 104; 105; 107; 115; 119; 139).

By this stage there remained 26 psalms in which the topic of death played a relatively significant part. Having isolated these psalms it was now possible to proceed with an analysis of them. On doing so, it materialised that, apart from three psalms (Pss. 16, 49, 73), the majority could be assigned to two main categories: psalms focusing on (a) death by violence, and (b) death by illness.

(a) Psalms concerning death by violence.

In all 16 psalms fall into this category. Of these, fourteen are pleas for deliverance from the threat of physical death at the hand of an enemy or enemies (Pss. 7; 9; 13; 22; 31; 44; 55; 56; 59; 86; 89; 94; 141; 143); the remaining two psalms express gratitude for deliverance already received (Pss. 18; 118). Since all of these psalms focus on the attacks of evildoers it seems reasonable to assume that deliverance from physical death is of primary concern.

(b) Psalms concerning death by illness.

Seven psalms may be classified under this heading, although it should perhaps be noted that 'illness' ought to be understood in quite general terms. Thus, for example, in Ps. 103 the psalmist may be suffering due to feelings of guilt (cf. vv. 3,8-12). Of these seven psalms, three are petitions for healing (Pss. 6; 41; 88), three are expressions of gratitude for healing already experienced (Pss. 30; 103; 116), and one is a combination of both forms, being first a plea for help, and then a song of thanksgiving (Ps. 28; it is usually classified as an Individual Lament). As with the psalms concerning death by violence, the primary interest of this group would appear to be restoration to full health and strength in the face of impending death.

All of the psalms considered under these two categories are usually classified by form-critics as either Laments or Songs of Thanksgiving.⁹ This is particularly significant especially when one considers Mowinckel's approach to the topic of the afterlife in the Psalms. As noted above, Mowinckel rejected outrightly the suggestion that the concept of resurrection is present in the Psalter. An examination of his reasons for doing so reveals that he relied heavily upon psalms of lament and thanksgiving.

As regards the Laments he noted that the psalmist describes his state of distress "not only as a deadly danger but as a real state of death. The suppliant finds himself in the underworld (Sheol, Hades), in the 'pit', the 'well'".¹⁰ Thus references to death and Sheol in psalms of lament need not be restricted to our concept of death as the actual termination of life here and now, but may include anything which impairs life. To go down to Sheol need imply nothing more than being close to death. Hence, according to Mowinckel, deliverance from Sheol can be understood without reference to the afterlife.

Regarding the Songs of Thanksgiving he comments,

Since the thanksgiving psalm...praises Yahweh for having already pulled the unfortunate person out of Sheol, it is evidently no question here of salvation into another life after death, but of deliverance from imminent danger of death into health and happiness and freedom on this earth.¹¹

Here also Mowinckel assumes that these psalms describe the individual as being in Sheol before experiencing divine deliverance. By adopting this approach Mowinckel eliminates from these thanksgiving psalms all possible indications that Yahweh resurrects to life someone who is, to our way of thinking, physically dead.¹²

However, while Mowinckel is probably correct in stating that these psalms have nothing to say regarding life after death, it is questionable whether any of them describe the psalmist as actually being incarcerated in Sheol. Thus, although Mowinckel himself quotes part of Psalm 88 in support of his position, the psalm itself does not state explicitly that the author was in Sheol:

For trouble fills my soul to the full,
my life draws near unto Sheol;

I am reckoned among those who sink to the pit,
I am like the man who has no strength...

Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit,
in the darkness, in the ocean's deep;
thy wrath lies heavy upon me

and all thy waves overwhelm me (Ps. 88:4f., 7f.; cf. Jonah ch. 2).

Such language is surely intended to be understood metaphorically rather than literally. The only other possible example in a lament of the psalmist claiming to be actually in Sheol is Psalm 86:13,

For great is your love towards me;

you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol

Here again the term Sheol is probably used in a figurative manner.

There are a few passages in the thanksgiving psalms where the author might be understood as claiming that he was in Sheol (Pss. 18:6; 30:4; 116:3). Yet even in these examples it is probably the case that the author did not

intend his comments to be interpreted absolutely literally. Psalm 30:4 provides an example of this:

O LORD, you brought me up from Sheol;

you spared me from going down into the pit.

The parallelism here indicates that the author is not thinking in terms of an actual descent into Sheol. Thus in spite of Mowinckel's suggestion to the contrary, it would seem likely that for the Hebrews Sheol designated specifically the abode of the dead and that a clear distinction was drawn between the realms of the living and the dead.

The above mentioned psalms of lament and thanksgiving clearly focus on God's ability to deliver his servants from the threat of physical death either at the hands of their enemies or through illness. Given the function of these psalms, it is surely not surprising that they make no reference to the afterlife. Rather they reveal the faith of their authors concerning Yahweh's sovereignty over human affairs in this present life. The fact that they contain no discussion of life after death tells us nothing about how the afterlife was perceived by their authors. We must recognise that the concept of the afterlife has no direct bearing upon the situations which are addressed in these particular psalms.

(c) The Remaining Psalms

Interestingly the three remaining psalms (Pss. 16; 49; 73) are never categorised as laments or psalms of thanksgiving. Psalm 16 is most often classified as a Song of Trust, and Psalms 49 and 73 are usually designated as Wisdom Psalms. Of these three psalms Psalm 49 figures most often in discussion concerning the afterlife in the Psalms. For this reason we shall focus our attention initially on it.

Psalm 49

In this particular psalm the interpretation of verse 16 is all important regarding the topic of life after death.

But God will redeem my soul from Sheol;

he will surely take me to himself.

According to Michael Goulder,

The majority view, represented by Delitzsch, Duhm, Schmidt, Krause, Weiser, J. van der Ploeg, von Rad, Eaton, Anderson, Rogerson and McKay, and Jacquet, take this to be a first groping statement of the survival of death...The majority...understand redemption from Sheol as eternal life with God. Bolder spirits, like Delitzsch, take 'receive me' (yqhny) to mean God's 'taking' the psalmist direct to heaven, like Enoch and Elijah; contemporary commentators usually prefer to leave the precise thought here vague - should we not expect vagueness when so great an assertion is first being attempted.¹³

For his part, Goulder interprets this psalm as a 'red-blooded warning' to foreign nations against invading Israel.¹⁴ The speaker is the Danite priest who warns the nations that any attempt to overthrow the Israelite monarchy and state will end in death for the invaders. In support of this claim Goulder interprets verse 7 as applying to foreign rulers: 'those who trust in their wealth and boast of their great riches?'. Similarly, 'that the psalmist is thinking of foreign kings trusting in their power and wealth, and planning to supplant Israel, is confirmed by their calling the lands after their own names in v. 11 (Heb. v. 12)'.¹⁵ In verse 13 the term yagar 'precious' is understood to refer to soldiers:

Warriors used to deck themselves in finery for the holy activity of battle in the early period...This gives a natural meaning for yqr as the precious metal ornaments worn by enemy soldiers coming to fight against Israel.¹⁶

However, there are two major drawbacks to Goulder's interpretation of the psalm. First, he fails to give due consideration to the wisdom nature of the psalm, in particular verses 4-5:

My mouth shall speak wisdom;
And the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.
I will incline mine ear to a parable:
I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

Furthermore, that these words are addressed to 'all you peoples' (v. 2) is also typical of the universal nature of wisdom literature. Secondly, if this psalm was intended to warn off foreign nations, one would have expected this to be more clearly stated. Warnings tend to be given in the clearest of terms, especially if we wish them to be taken seriously. Thus, although Goulder's detailed study of the MT is to be commended, his overall understanding of the Psalm is less than convincing. It is highly unlikely that we should read it as a warning addressed to foreign nations about the consequences of invading Israel.

Another recent and unusual interpretation of Psalm 49 is that of Peter Craigie in the Word Biblical Commentary. In his translation of the psalm he places verse 16 within inverted commas to indicate that this is direct speech.

Against this bleak picture of the destiny of the wealthy, the poet quotes their (imaginary) words of self-confidence: 'Surely God will redeem me...' (v 16). They think their position of privilege in this life will give them also a position of privilege when it comes to death.¹⁷

It is this 'deceptive confidence' that the psalmist attacks, as he conveys his wise counsel to the wealthy and powerful.

Craigie's interpretation of the psalm, however, creates further problems. Is the psalmist stating that there is no distinction between the ultimate fate of the good and the evil? And if so, what comfort would the righteous find from this message, especially when surrounded by treacherous foes (as implied in v. 6)? It is hardly a comfort to those who are oppressed to learn that they will end up sharing the same final destiny as their wealthy oppressors. Craigie's interpretation is too subtle and requires that verse 16 be understood as a false statement. There is, however, no indication in the text that this is so.

A number of objections have been raised against the 'eternal life' interpretation of Psalm 49.¹⁸ Three main

arguments have been put forward. First, verse 16 is compared with Hosea 13:14:

I will ransom them from the power of Sheol;

I will redeem them from death.

Where, O death, are your plagues?

Where, O Sheol, is your destruction?

Since this passage in Hosea is understood to refer to preservation from ordinary physical death, a similar interpretation must apply to Psalm 49. Secondly, it is argued that the psalmist's comments in verses 8-10 do not support an 'afterlife' interpretation of verse 16.

Redemption here does not involve actual death:

That he should live on for ever and not see decay'
(v. 9).

There is here, so it is argued, no thought of life after death, but rather continuation of this present existence. Thirdly, 'he shall receive me' (v. 16) also comes in Psalm 18:17 without implying some kind of translation similar to that experienced by Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2 Ki. 2:1-18).

However, it is doubtful if any of these objections are actually sufficient to overthrow the 'afterlife' interpretation of the psalm. The precise meaning of Hosea 13:14 is difficult to determine, and it may well be that one ought to interpret this passage in terms of life after death. As regards the relationship between verses 8-10 and verse 16, a careful reading of the text suggests that one cannot equate the redemption mentioned in the earlier verses with that referred to in verse 16.

Whereas in verse 8 the ransom is paid to God, in verse 16 it is God who redeems. This would suggest that the author has in mind two quite separate situations.

Finally, the comparison of 49:16 with Psalm 18:17 is hardly sufficient grounds for interpreting "he will take me" as relating simply to this life. The context in which the expression occurs in Psalm 18 is quite different from that of Psalm 49. In Psalm 18 it refers to deliverance from earthly enemies:

He (Yahweh) reached down from on high and took hold of me;

he drew me out of deep waters.

He rescued me from my powerful enemy,
from my foes, who were too strong for me.
He confronted me in the day of my disaster,
but the LORD was my support.
He brought me out into a spacious place;
he rescued me because he delighted in me. (vv.
17-20)

In Psalm 49, however, vv. 14-20 focus on the consequences of death. In this context the statement 'he will take me' surely takes on the same significance as found in Genesis 5:24 and 2 Kings 2:3,5,9.

From the preceding discussion Dahood's description of Psalm 49 seems accurate:

A Wisdom psalm reflecting on the transitory nature of wealth and pleasure. One should not envy the rich, for the grave awaits them, where their lot will be that of the beasts who perish. Paradise with Yahweh, however, awaits the just man who places his confidence in him rather than in earthly riches and pleasure.¹⁹

Psalm 73

In certain ways Psalm 73 parallels Psalm 49. Once again attention is focused on the relationship between the righteous and the wicked. The psalm begins with the author's envy of the prosperity of the wicked, in contrast to his own sufferings. The tension caused by this dilemma, however, is eventually resolved by the recognition that the actions of the wicked will lead ultimately to their destruction. Against this the author contrasts the privileged position of the righteous:

Yet I am always with you;
you hold me by my right hand.
You guide me with your counsel,
and afterwards you will take me into glory.
Whom have I in heaven but you?
And being with you, I desire nothing on earth.
My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion
for ever (vv. 23-26).

In the differing fates of the righteous and the wicked

the author finds relief from the dilemma which almost destroys his faith in God.

Regarding these latter verses the question naturally arises as to whether or not the psalmist is looking beyond this life to the next. Dahood is in no doubt that the events described here relate to the afterlife. He comments,

How can one reconcile the justice of God with the inequities in his government of the world? The poet finds the solution of the problem in the final punishment of the wicked (vss. 18-19) and the eternal union of the just with God in heaven (vss. 23-26).²⁰

Similarly, Artur Weiser also sees in these latter verses a clear reference by the psalmist to life after death:

In view of what precedes, it will hardly be possible to interpret the words that follow, 'and afterwards thou wilt receive me to glory', as meaning that his sufferings will come to an end during his earthly life; rather does it seem that in these words is expressed hope in the consummation of his communion with God after death, a thought which would fit without any difficulty in the context of the ideas developed in the psalm.²¹

However, the convictions of Dahood and Weiser are not shared by all commentators. Many writers are loathe to find in this psalm a reference to the afterlife. This reluctance arises from the belief that it was only in the late post-exilic period that a distinction was drawn between the fate of the wicked and the righteous after death. Prior to this the Israelites believed that everyone on dying descended to Sheol where they experienced a dull, shadowy existence. A.A. Anderson, for example, argues that it was out of this background of belief that the author of Psalm 73 penned his work:

Had the author of this Psalm believed that the afterlife provided for a final judgment of God, he would have found little difficulty in explaining the prosperity of the wicked and the misfortune of the righteous. Therefore it seems that he also must

have shared the common Sheol belief. On the other hand, Ps. 73 may represent a tentative venture to go beyond the then current beliefs, although the result would be a glimpse rather than a firm faith...²²

Although the logic of Anderson's argument is compelling, it is not necessary to maintain that the psalmist initially viewed the righteous and the wicked as both descending to Sheol. It is equally possible to understand the psalm describing the reassurance which one Israelite received after being tempted to follow the ways of the wicked (vv. 2-3). The psalm does not address in a cold abstract manner the dilemma created by the prosperity of the wicked and the misfortune of the righteous (as in Ps. 49), but rather focuses on the temptation which comes to the righteous to forsake their previous convictions (cf. v. 13) and become like the wicked. As the psalmist indicates, it was his envy of the wicked which made him blind to their ultimate fate (vv. 21-22). It was not until he took his eyes from them and turned to God that the folly of his thinking was revealed (vv. 16-17). Consequently, there is no need to assume that the author could only have composed the psalm at a time when it was believed that the righteous and the wicked shared a common destiny in Sheol.

Another factor argues against Anderson's rejection of the 'afterlife' interpretation of the psalm. This concerns the commonly accepted view that in the pre-exilic period the Israelites believed that all men, regardless of their moral character, descended to Sheol. This, however, is only one of a number of ways in which Sheol has been understood.²³ A survey of how Sheol is used in the Old Testament reveals two important factors. First, Sheol is usually described in a negative manner: it is the antithesis of heaven (e.g., Jb. 11:8; Ps. 139:8; Am. 9:2); it is to be feared and avoided (e.g., 2 Sa. 22:6; Pss. 16:10; 30:4; 86:13). Secondly, in a very significant number of occurrences Sheol is linked with evil-doers (e.g., Nu. 16:30,33; 1 Ki. 2:6,9; Jb. 24:19; Pss. 9:18; 31:18; 49:15; Pr. 5:5; 7:27; 9:18; Is. 5:14; 14:9,11,15; Ezk. 31:15-17; 32:21,27). These observations

certainly favour the view that in the Old Testament Sheol denotes the final abode of the wicked.²⁴ Furthermore, although it is sometimes stated that certain passages indicate that the righteous also descended to Sheol, the evidence for this is not as convincing as is usually assumed. Thus, there seems to be no reason to assume that the belief, that different fates awaited the righteous and the wicked after death, only developed in post-exilic times.

Psalm 16

Psalm 16 is generally described as a Song of Confidence or Trust. For us the final few verses of the psalm are of particular importance:

Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest secure,
because you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor will you let your Holy One see decay.
You have made known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand (vv.
9-11).

In the opinion of Dahood the psalm is a 'profession of faith' by a 'Canaanite convert to Yahwism', with verses 10-11 being 'a statement of the poet's belief in immortality'.²⁵ In support of this, he understands the Hebrew word hym (v. 11) as meaning 'eternal life'. According to Dahood, the word is not only found with this meaning in Daniel 12:2, but is also employed with the same sense in the Ugaritic texts.

However, the majority of recent writers prefer to understand these comments as a reference by the author to God's ability to protect him from an untimely death. The psalmist is not speaking about life after death, but rather about the preservation of this present life. Thus, for example, Craigie comments,

The psalmist acknowledges that God makes him know, or experience, the 'path of life,' not the afterlife, but the fullness of life here and now which is enriched by the rejoicing which emerges from an awareness of the divine presence.²⁶

In support of this interpretation Craigie translates verse 10 as follows:

for you do not abandon me to Sheol,
you do not permit your godly one to see the Pit.
Thus there is no reference here to the afterlife.

Either interpretation of the psalm is possible, and I see little to separate between them. Whereas Psalms 49 and 73 most probably refer to life after death, it is extremely difficult to decide in the case of Psalm 16. However, one cannot rule out the possibility that the psalmist may be thinking about the afterlife.

In the light of the above discussion the following conclusions may be drawn. Firstly, the traditional consensus that the Psalter contains no significant discussion of the Hebrew conception of the afterlife must be questioned. By concentrating on the numerically greater Psalms of Lament and Thanksgiving scholars came, not surprisingly, to view the psalms as being uninterested in life after death. Unfortunately, insufficient attention was given to the very small group of psalms which do not fall within these larger categories, and consequently important evidence to the contrary has been neglected. Rather than being assessed independently Psalms 49 and 73 have been wrongly interpreted in the light of results obtained elsewhere in the Psalter.

Secondly, it must be noted that Dahood finds allusions to life after death in psalms other than those considered above (e.g., Ps. 1:3-6; 11:7; 17:15; 21:7; 27:13; 36:9-10; he discovers references to 'eternal life', 'beatific vision', 'Elysian fields' and other expressions connected with the afterlife). To what extent this is fully justified remains to be seen, although it is now apparent that in many of these psalms Dahood may well have overreached himself in his use of Ugaritic parallels. In spite of this his vigorous rejection of the prevailing consensus that the Psalter contains no mention of life after death ought not to be dismissed outrightly, and as we have demonstrated above there are

good grounds for believing that in at least two psalms, 49 and 73, the concept of the afterlife figures prominently.

Notes

1. BASOR, 186 (1967), p. 54. Significantly, Dahood himself recognised fully that not all his proposals would 'stand the test of present criticism or future discoveries' (Psalms I, 1-50, (Garden City, 1965) (Anchor Bible), p. XX).
2. Ibid., p. XXXVI.
3. S. Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship, (Oxford, 1962) (revised translation of Offersang og Sangoffer, Oslo, 1951), vol. 1, p. 240.
4. Psalms I, 1-50, p. XXXVI.
5. JBL, 85 (1966), p. 484.
6. Psalms, III, 101-150, (Garden City, 1970) (Anchor Bible), pp. XLI-LII.
7. 'Intimations of Immortality and the Old Testament,' JBL, 91 (1972), pp. 158-171.
8. Pss. 5; 6; 7; 9; 13; 16; 18; 22; 28; 30; 31; 33; 35; 37; 40; 41; 44; 49; 55; 56; 59; 68; 72; 73; 78; 82; 86; 88; 89; 94; 102; 103; 104; 105; 107; 113; 115; 116; 118; 119; 139; 141; 143. All psalm references are to the Massoretic Text.
9. Cf. B.W. Anderson, Out of the Depths, (Philadelphia, 1970), pp. 173-177.
10. S. Mowickel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship, p. 239.
11. Ibid., p. 240.
12. A somewhat similar position was reached by C.F. Barth in his book, Die Errettung vom Tode in den individuellen Klage- und Dankliedern des Alten Testaments, (Kollikon, 1947).
13. The Psalms of the Sons of Korah, (Sheffield, 1982) (JSOT Supplement Series, 20), p. 181-2.
14. Ibid., p. 195.
15. Ibid., p. 187.
16. Ibid., p. 190.
17. P. Craigie, Psalms 1-50, (Waco, Texas, 1983) (Word

- Biblical Commentary), p. 360.
18. Cf. Goulder, op. cit., p. 182.
 19. Psalms I, 1-50, p. 296.
 20. Ibid., pp. 187-188.
 21. A. Weiser, The Psalms, (London, 1962) (Old Testament Library), p. 514.
 22. A.A. Anderson, The Book of Psalms, (London, 1972) (New Century Bible Commentary), p. 535.
 23. For a fuller discussion of the Hebrew perception of Sheol see D. Alexander, 'The Old Testament View of Life After Death', Themelios, 11 (1986), pp. 42-44.
 24. Cf. A. Heidel, The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels, (Chicago, 2nd. edition, 1949), p. 184.
 25. Dahood, Psalms I. 1-50 , p. 87.
 26. Craigie, Psalms 1-50, p. 158.

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THE EARLY CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION OF ABRAHAM AND THE PLACE OF JAMES WITHIN THAT CONTEXT.

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Abraham appears in the NT more frequently than any OT figure except Moses. Moulton and Geden list seventy-two occurrences of the name Abraham in the NT. Some texts seem to be more worthy of attention than others. This discrimination among texts is the result of the observation that in certain cases the name Abraham either (1) is employed in a polemical context or is used for an apologetic purpose, or (2) attention is focused on Abraham as an example from which some theological point is derived or argued. For the purpose of this study we will give attention to Jas 2: 18-24 as one of a selection of NT texts that use Abraham for a polemical, apologetic, or archetypical intent.

A Probe toward Understanding James' Interpretation of Abraham (4:18-24).

In attempting to understand how and why James interprets Abraham as he does and in attempting to reconstruct the historical context in which James expounded his explanation, it is helpful to answer two sets of questions.

(1) Does James' interpretation of Abraham display clear affinities to either Jewish or Christian exegesis?

(2) Does James seem to know Paul, and does his interpretation of Abraham indicate an anti-Paul or anti-Pauline bias?

An exegetical affinity?

When we compare James' interpretation of Abraham with extra-NT literature in which Abraham is mentioned, a marked likeness to Jewish exegesis becomes evident. This similarity between James and Jewish interpretation of Abraham is particularly obvious in two shared tendencies. The first tendency is that of interpreting Gen 15:6 in direct relation to Genesis 22, the offering of Isaac (the Akedah). A second tendency is the inclination to refer to Abraham as the "friend of God."

In the OT, Neh 9:7-8 reflects the early disposition to understand God's making a covenant with Abraham (Gen 15:5) and the reckoning of Abraham as righteous (Gen 15:6) as a result of God finding Abraham's

heart faithful. Further, both Isa 41:8 and 2 Chr 20:7 offer canonical instances of references to Abraham as God's friend.

The Apocrypha and pseudepigraphical writings continue and expand the tendency to interpret Gen 15:6 from the perspective of Genesis 22. In the Apocrypha, 1 Macc 2:52 Sir 44:19-22 (especially vv 20-21), and Pr Azar 12 indicate clearly that it was because Abraham was found faithful when he was tested that it was reckoned unto him as righteousness. A theme of Jubilees (18:15-16; 19:9; 23:10; and 24:11) is that Abraham was found faithful and then recorded on the heavenly tablets as God's friend because he was perfect and well-pleasing in righteousness during his whole life. The Damascus Document (CD 3:2-3) records that Abraham was God's friend because he kept the commandments.

Rabbinic literature amplifies these tendencies that are displayed in both James and earlier Jewish literature. Much of this literature comes from many centuries after the NT, but the frequency of these motifs from the second century to the Middle Ages raises the likelihood that first century Jews would have had similar attitudes toward Abraham. M. Abot 5:3 says, "With ten temptations was Abraham our father tempted, and he stood steadfast in them all, to show how great was the love (of God) of Abraham our father." The legendary ten temptations of Abraham usually have the Akedah as the final and greatest test and often the Akedah alone is named as a code for the ten tests by which Abraham was proven righteous. M. Qidd. 4:14 and b. Meg. 11a both imply this same line of thought. Gen. Rab. 55 argues that the ten tests of Abraham show Abraham's righteousness, since only the righteous are tested; and Gen. Rab. 56 says of Abraham's righteousness that if no merit has stood in Abraham's favour (he having been tested so thoroughly), then no creature has value before God. Exod. Rab. 23, in discussing the singing of the Song by the Sea, claims that the singing was made possible through the merit of Abraham: It was because of Abraham's faith in God that Israel was privileged to recite the Song by the Sea. In all of these texts, there is the idea of a righteousness proven to be possessed by Abraham, a righteousness that has a

meritoriousness that brings about subsequent benefits. This same line of thought is found in Mek.Exod.14:15, where the merit of Abraham's deed (the Akedah) results in the splitting of the sea for the Israelites. Further, Mek.Exod.14:31 indicates that Abraham was given the inheritance of Israel as a reward for his faith. The rabbinic literature is equally rich in amplification of the concept of Abraham as God's friend. The existence of this concept is interesting in itself, since in the Genesis account Abraham is not designated a friend [אֱלֹהִים or φίλος] but a fearer [יִרְאָה or φοβέσθαι] of God.² As we saw, the OT shows the origin of this concept, and the pseudepigraphical writings perpetuate the designation. It is, however, the rabbinic writings that not only preserve the title but labour to explain the appellation. M. Abot 5:3 and certain Baraithot (y. Ber. ix.14b; y.Sota v.20c) ground the motivation of Abraham's faithfulness through testing (the Akedah?) in his love for God. Other documents portray God's friendship toward Abraham. Gen.Rab. 61 depicts Abraham as God's close friend. Mek. Exod. 14:15 implies God's friendship toward Abraham in accounting for the splitting of the sea as a result of Abraham's merit before God. B. Sota 31a reasons, however, that fearing God with Abraham indicates motivation from love. In relation to the idea of Abraham as a God-fearer (as in Gen 22:12), this text cites Isa 41:8 ("the seed of Abraham who loved me") and then reasons that the one who acts from love is greater than the one who acts from fear-- the merit of love being twice as great as the merit of fear.

In other Jewish literature, both of the distinct tendencies found in James are evident. Gen 15:6 is interpreted in relation to Genesis 22 by Josephus (Ant.18.1 223 and 1.8.4. 233, 234) and Philo (On the Unchangeableness of God 1 4, and Pseudo-Philo (Bib.Ant.18.5). Abraham appears as a "friend of God" in Philo (On Sobriety 11 55-56 and On Abraham 15 71), the Apocalypse of Abraham (9.6), and the Testament of Abraham (1 in the long and 4 in the short version).

In extra-NT early Christian literature 1 Clem. 31:2 offers a different pattern of thought from the line of reasoning that interprets Abraham's righteousness as a result of his faithfulness in testing. "For what reason

was Father Abraham blessed? Was it not because he wrought righteousness and truth through faith?" In two places (Against Heresies 5:3 and 7:2) Irenaeus articulates a Pauline understanding of Abraham. Abraham's faith (both a commitment to monotheism and a confidence that God would multiply his seed) was imputed to him for righteousness.

With regard to the notion that Abraham was a "friend of God," 1 Clement twice gives that title to Abraham (1 Clem. 10:1 and 17:2). There is however, nothing particularly distinct in these designations except that in 1 Clem. 10:1, the phrase "Abraham styled 'the friend, was found faithful...." may suggest that in Clement's mind Abraham was called "the friend" before he was found faithful.

In this survey of extra-NT literature that shares one or both of the two traits found in James, we have seen that James is similar to Jewish interpretation of Abraham. There are other factors, however, that we must now consider in order to understand what James is saying about Abraham.

A Historical Understanding of the Figure of Abraham in Early Christian Thought and Life.³

In a recent article, T.B. Dozeman³ argues for a particular historical background against which we may be able to understanding the interpretation of Abraham in James. Dozeman's attention is focused on understanding the occurrence of σπέρμα Αβραάμ in John 8. He reads the text of the Fourth Gospel as a two-level drama wherein the Sitz im Leben Kirche may shape or colour the stories that are portrayed in the Sitz im Leben Jesu. Further, Dozeman employs the insights of D. Georgi⁴ and S. Sandmel⁵ to make the references to Abraham in John 8 intelligible by noticing a tendency among ancient Jewish writers to use Abraham in a well-developed apologetic that was formulated for Gentiles. From the understanding of Abraham as an apologetic figure that originally functioned for the purposes of a Jewish mission, Dozeman argues that the occurrence and employment of Abraham (σπέρμα Αβραάμ) in Galatians, 2 Corinthians, Romans, and John should be understood as statements in the polemical context of missions. Indeed, those using

Abraham terminology are to be understood as Jewish Christians, or better, Christian Jews who are carrying on a Law-observant mission. We see Paul meeting these Christian Jews as opponents and picking up their Abraham language and thought and then developing his counter-exposition of Abraham in response to these opponents. John 8: 31-59 can be read similarly as a "unified debate against the law-observant Christian Jews from the perspective of the party of freedom."⁶

This interpretation does not work so much to establish a unilinear trajectory in the thought and life of early Christianity as demonstrate a probable historical situation that may have existed in one or several forms. We may conceive of the polemical situation in which Paul was engaged in the following manner:

"teachers" in Galatia → Gal 3 → [2 Cor →] Rom 4.

When a text like John 8 comes into the picture, there are several possible ways of understanding how this element fits into the pattern of the polemic that we have just seen:

(1) "teachers" → Gal 3 [2 Cor →] Rom 4 → John 8; or

(2) "teachers" → Gal 3 [2 Cor →] Rom 4
→ John 8; or

(3) "teachers" → Gal 3 → [2 Cor →] Rom 4, and
other "teachers" → John 8.

Texts such as Matt 3:9 and Luke 3:8 may be understood to reflect all these same background possibilities and at least one further situation, i.e., a historical conflict with Jewish apologists.

Thus we raise further questions. Do the "teachers" at Galatia have as their predecessors in "Abraham-thinking" a body of Jewish apologists? Or, do Jewish apologists who use an Abraham-argument arise in response to Christian Jews (the "teachers") who employ Abraham for a Law-observant mission? Or, do Jewish thinkers take up Abraham in response to Pauline lines of thought? We may conceive of these alternatives in this way:

(1) Jewish apologists → "teachers" → Paul; or

(2) "teachers" → Jewish apologists
→ Paul; or

(3) "teachers" → Paul → Jewish apologists.

Help for deciding between these options comes from W.G. Braude⁸ who argues that although there probably was not an organized Jewish mission to Gentiles at the time of Paul's missionary activity, there is, however, a strand of rabbinic tradition that affirms proselytization upon the basis of the idea that the Law is for all. In such pro-proselytizing thought Abraham appears as a major figure, the archetype for a proselyte. Braude has argued convincingly that the pattern of thought represented in this strand of rabbinic tradition extends backward to the period contemporary with and prior to Paul's missionary efforts. We may conclude that the first of the alternatives above is clearly the most probable.

James and Paul

Scholars are not in agreement concerning the relation of James and Paul. M. Dibelius sees James at odds with some Pauline slogans.⁹ J. Jeremias argues that James and Paul are not at odds¹⁰ but are dealing with two different concerns. U. Luck claims that pitting James and Paul is not the appropriate method for interpreting either or both.¹¹ R. Walker sees James' view of the relationship of faith and works as different from Paul's; thus James should not be understood as a contradiction to Paul or as an attack against Paulinism.¹² A.E. Barnett holds that James wrote to correct a misuse of Paul.¹³ R.B. Ward says that James may or may not know Paul.¹⁴ W.G. Kümmel reasons that the conceptual distance between James and Paul indicates that James is debating a formalized Paul some years after Paul's death.¹⁵

With such diversity of opinions, we might be at an impasse if it were not for further insights from three sources: (1) J. Louis Martyn¹⁶ suggests that it is profitable to study the occurrences of the word $\tau\iota\varsigma$ in James. $\tau\iota\varsigma$ occurs ten times in James and is used in two distinct ways. On the one hand, the use of $\tau\iota\varsigma$ suggests that the author of James knows a community to which he makes comments (see 1:5; 2:16 5:13, 14, 19-- and perhaps 1:23, 26, and 3:2); on the other hand, the author employs $\tau\iota\varsigma$ to indicate some other person or persons whom he considers in making his remarks (2:14 and 18). Martyn further suggests that when addressing

the community, the author is concerned with an antinomy of $\pi\omicron\lambda\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$ and $\acute{\alpha}\kappa\rho\alpha\tau\eta\varsigma$; but when the author speaks with consideration of those whom he knows at some distance, he becomes involved in antinomy of $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\alpha$. Although James argues this $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ - $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\alpha$ antinomy, he appears to have considered the paradox unreal. (2) D. Bartlett¹⁷ confirms Martyn's second point (regarding these antinomies) when, after pointing out that James' interpretation of Abraham is clearly Jewish in its basic Tendenz, he claims that James does not sound Jewish in distinguishing between faith and works. In fact, Jewish exegesis does not distinguish between Abraham's faith and a manifestation of that faith called works. Bartlett suggests that James is using secondhand terminology in his faith-works discussion and that James has borrowed this nomenclature from Paul or Paulinists. (3) More exact confirmation of the line of thought that we are developing comes from W. Schrage.¹⁸ Schrage points to James' use of the peculiarly Pauline phrase $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\upsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$. Schrage avers that the choice of prepositions is distinctively Pauline. Further, James generally prefers to use the article with nouns, while Paul does not. Yet, in 2:14-26 James falls into an anarthrous style. Thus we see that the larger section of Jas 2:14-26 is marked by (1) a distancing use of $\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma$, (2) an unreal $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ - $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\alpha$ antinomy, and (3) a shift away from typical Jewish exegetical thought. Jas 2:14-26 is also (4) the locus of the peculiarly Pauline coupling of $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$ with $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\upsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$, and (5) a lapse into an anarthrous use of nouns not consonant with the general language pattern in the rest of James but that may be found in Paul. We may, therefore, conclude that James, who has basically Jewish presuppositions about Abraham, enters into a polemical dialogue with Paul or Paulinists. Dibelius may be correct in asserting that James is "not writing under the sort of Pauline influence which could be explained as resulting from a reading of Paul's letters."¹⁹ Nevertheless, we may ask if James could not be responding rather directly to something Paul wrote - such as Galatians 3. Only the secondary level of concern displayed in relation to the $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ - $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\alpha$ antinomy prevents us from concluding that James had Paul before him. Therefore

we are safest to conclude that James has either heard something of Paul or that he is responding to some kind of Paulinist person, group, or activity.²⁰

A Final Note

What can we say about James? We have seen that his basic understanding of Abraham is related to Jewish exegesis. His somewhat awkward treatment of the πίστις-ἔργα antinomy has led us, through consideration of the convergence of several facts, to see James arguing against someone or something Pauline. So, from whom has James learned about Abraham? The information that we have considered causes me to suspect that James knew something about Abraham before he heard of the rather original interpretation of Abraham offered by Paul. I suspect that what James knew (and taught?) about Abraham would have been not unlike Heb 11:8-19. The linear presentation of the faith of Abraham in Hebrews is compatible with the image of linearity in Christian life depicted in Jas 1:1-18. For James πίστις is a stance or commitment that, from time to time, is subjected to τὸ δοκίμιον. The outcome of the testing of faith is ὑπομονή -- a quality beyond faith achieved by the testing of faith. Thus, as a Christian one moves in and through the testing of faith (τὸ δοκίμιον τῆς πίστεως) from imperfection to perfection and completion.

NOTES

1. Gal 3:6-9; 2 Cor 11:21b-23; Rom 4:1-5; Mt 3:7-9; Luke 3:7-9; Jn 8:31-59; Heb 11:8-19.
2. R.E. Brown (R.E. Brown and J.P. Meier, Antioch and Rome [New York: Paulist, 1983] esp. chap. 7) argues persuasively that Paul was keenly aware of the situation in the Roman church. Indeed, Brown calls Romans "a letter shaped by Roman Christianity" (105). I would like to thank Brown for making the page proofs of his work available to me prior to the publication of the book.
3. For a more detailed discussion of this phenomenon, see Irving Jacobs, "The Midrashic Background for James II.21-3," NTS 22(1975-1976) 458-461.
4. "Sperma Abraam in John 8 and Related Literature," CBQ 42(1980) 342-358.

5. Die Gegner des Paulus in 2. Korintherbrief. Studien zur Religiösen Propaganda in der Spatantike (WMANT 11, Neukirchen-Vluyn; Neukirchener Verlag, 1964).
6. Philo's Place in Judaism: A Study of Conceptions of Abraham in Jewish Literature (Aug.ed.; New York KTAV, 1971).
7. Dozeman, 357-358.
8. The arrows in the following diagrams are not intended to mean "becomes" but to indicate lines of influence in the history of early Christian thought. In speaking of "lines of influence", I do not mean to indicate anything so definite as a trajectory (see J.M. Robinson and H. Koester, Trajectories through Early Christianity [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971]).
9. Jewish Proselytizing in the First Five Centuries of the Common Era: The Age of the Tannaim and Amoraim (Brown University Studies 6; Menasha, WI: George Banta Publishing Company, 1940).
10. James (11th rev. ed. H. Greeven; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) 29 et passim.
11. "Paul and James," Exp Tim 66 (1954-1955) 368-371.
12. "Der Jakobusbrief und die Theologie des Paulus," TG1 61 (1971) 161-179
13. "Allein aus Werken," ZIK 61 (1964) 191
14. "Letter of James," IDB 2 (1962) 795.
15. Letter of James," IDBSup (1976) 469.
16. Einleitung in das Neue Testament (20th ed.; Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1980) 361-362.
17. This suggestion was made to me by Martyn in a NT seminar at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Subsequent conversations with Martyn were important for the development of the present article.
18. "The Epistle of James as a Jewish-Christian Document," SBLASP 1979, ed. P.J. Achtemeier (2 vols.; Missoula: MT: Scholars Press, 1979) 2.173-179.
19. H. Balz and W. Schrage, Die "Katholischen" Briefe: Die Briefe des Jakobus, Petrus, Johannes und Judas (NTD 10; 12th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980) 29-37, esp. 34-37.
20. James 30
21. S. Laws reaches a somewhat similar conclusion by a different path in The Epistle of James (HNTC; San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980) 118-139.

"Peace on Earth to Men...." (Luke 2.14)

Kevin Smyth

The translation "And on earth peace to men of goodwill" going back to the Old Latin and Vulgate reading "Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis" is out of favour among exegetes. The Revised Standard Version has "On earth peace to men with whom he (God) is well pleased" and only offers in a footnote the now practically outcast "On earth peace, goodwill among men" (Byzantine or Majority text). This is also preferred by the New English Bible translators with their translation "On earth peace for men on whom his favour rests" and their footnote "On earth his peace, his favour towards men" (Cf AV). Similarly "La Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible" (Paris 1972) gives "Sur la terre paix pour les hommes, ses bien-aimés". and whereas Luther reflects the AV "Friede auf Erden und den Menschen ein Wohlfallen" ("On earth peace, favour towards men"), the modern edition would modify according to "a better attested reading" ie "Friede auf Erden bei den Menschen seines Wohlfallens" thus rejoining the RSV and NEB. In none of these fairly representative translations does the Old Latin or Vulgate rate a mention.

Part of the problem rests with the meaning given to the Greek word eudokia = good pleasure. It is argued that the dominant meaning was the "divine good pleasure" linking up with the book of Ecclesiasticus where the notion was most fully developed. /1 Such "purely linguistic" considerations were reinforced by theological ones: "The understanding of the Latin Church, namely, men who are of good will, implies legalism if a good will is regarded as decisive for salvation. Since this is completely rejected in the Gospel, eudokia here means 'the unfathomably gracious and sovereign good pleasure of God'!" / 2

The linguistic argument did not however always convince. W. Bauer, /3 still put in the first place "the goodwill of men", citing Paul eg "Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but other with goodwill(eudokia)"(Phil.1. 15) (Cf also Phil 2.13; 2 Thess 1.11) Bauer could have added a sentence from an intertestamental writing from the first century BC, the "Psalms of Solomon", "With approval(eudokia) and happiness support my soul" (16.12),

but he was not being exhaustive. "This" (ie as "goodwill of men") "may be the place to classify Luke 2.14". Others Bauer noted in the second place would prefer "favour, good pleasure" meaning people on whom divine favours rests. (So often LXX; cf Enoch 1.8) Bauer leaves out the theological consideration; the linguistic evidence is presented with contemporary usage, first from the NT and second, from the more ancient usage, the LXX. And whereas Schrenk /4 said that the human will was intended "only twice", Bauer gave three examples and possibly four. Of the meaning "divine will" there are really only two instances in the NT: Matt 11.26 and Luke 10.21 are parallel; Eph 1,5 and 9 are in the same breath. But the numerical argument, the ratio say of four to two, cannot clinch a case. The question was considered still open.

After the publication of the Qumran texts, however, one commentator could write: "The Vulgate translates, slavishly 'Bonae voluntatis', probably thinking of men's goodwill. The centuries-old debate may be laid to rest now that the Qumran texts have finally provided "proof" ie for the modern renderings (RSV, NEB etc). /5 The fourteen odd pall-bearers cited in this scholar's (H. Schürmann) notes have their views summarised in I.H. Marshall: "Earlier scholars...suspected that the unusual phrase here was the equivalent of 'ʾanše rāṣōn or bene rēsônô or the corresponding Aramaic phrase. This guess has now been raised to virtual certainty by the attestation of such phrases at Qumran....The phrase means "Those upon whom God's will/favour rests", and expresses the thought of God's free choice of those whom he wills to favour and save. Hence the older translation "men of goodwill" — (homines bonae voluntatis, Vulg., Zahn, Lagrange), unlikely on theological grounds with its suggestion of human merit, can be dropped from consideration." /6

This now popular conclusion is reached by errors of fact and needs to be re-considered.

Schrenk /7 said "'Men who are of good will' implies legalism if a good will is regarded as decisive for salvation." Since he neither verifies nor falsifies his protasis, the sentence is non-performative, that is, says nothing. But he goes on as if he had said something (see above). Marshall is not much different. Schürmann,

ignoring the Pelagian overtones, considers theology only in a footnote and agrees that no far-reaching conclusions as to Luke should be drawn from the Qumran notion of predestination. /8 Predestination came up apropos of the translation, "voluntas dei eligen et praedestinans" ie

"God's will choosing and predestining" /9 But before theology comes exegesis, explanation of the text as it stands. And here too errors have been made.

There is an error of fact. The new translation appeals to the Qumran writings. But there is in fact no exactly matching phrase there. One finds "men of his good pleasure", "sons of your good pleasure", "the time of his good pleasure" /10 but not the simple "men of good pleasure". The lack of a suffix indicating the divine will was seen as a difficulty by Schürmann /11, who countered by saying that there were "enough examples of the translator economizing on the suffix." /12 However, the LXX gives twenty-nine occurrences of eudokia. /13 And comparison with the Hebrew, where possible, shows no example of the omission of the Hebrew suffix in the Greek translation. But the check is really superfluous. The real point is that when Schürmann says there was a (pronominal) suffix in the Hebrew, he is committing a petitio principii. He has to prove that the phrase means "his good pleasure" - and grants himself what is precisely in question.

An error of method, to compound the factual, is the appeal to the Hebrew. It was "to abandon the data for a hypothesis" - to substitute a guess, no matter how well educated for a fact. /14 At best appeal to the Hebrew to modify a Greek translation can suggest a possibility. It cannot offer proof. On Matt.5.3 ("Blessed are the poor in spirit") Dupont considers "poor in spirit" with the Qumran anšē ruah in mind, said it was conceivable" and would not be "rash" to translate a Greek phrase as if it were Hebrew - "to suppose, that, reading the Greek word ptōchoi in his source, Matthew recognized there the ʿanāwīm of the Bible, and that he wished to indicate the spiritual import of the term by having recourse to the procedure which led the people of Qumran to speak of the ʿanweh rūah...."the humble of spirit" (des humbles d'esprit)" /15 So he concludes, /16 , after discussing the prominence of the humble poor in the OT and Qumran (as if then they had to appear here

in Matt), that "the evangelist uses a Greek expression in the sense it would have in Hebrew" /17. However that may be Dom Dupont is right in saying that the sense is inaccessible to the ordinary reader of Greek ("pas perceptible au niveau du grec ordinaire"). So too with Luke 2.14.

This brings up a second matter of method. To appeal to "the Hebrew" is not merely to indulge in the speculation of which the historian R. Collingwood says, "Conjectures and the assertions of mere possibilities are so much romancing and poetry, an expression of the wilful thinking of the historian". /18 The evocation of the mythical Hebrew (as in the semantics of the LXX) is wrong, misguided and unwarranted. "Words written in Greek are, just as they stand, in their Greek meaning, fully operative" (völlig gültig) /19 This can be illustrated especially from the methods used in ancient education. But there is an example at hand for all: Matt 1.23, "The virgin shall conceive" (RSV "A virgin....." translates the Hebrew of Isa 7.14, not the Greek) relies on the LXX. The Hebrew had "young (marriageable) girl". Matt knew no one would question his text. So too Luke. Who would think of re-translating Ps 15, quoted according to the LXX at Acts 2:25-28, in the light of the Hebrew original? As Dorrie says; "the question of whether [in the Lxx] important Hebrew concepts were properly rendered, was not asked for a time [between LXX and Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion] at all...This basic rule should be remembered above all in treating many problems in the NT" /20 - to use the overworked phraseology: a Greek phrase is a Greek phrase is a Greek phrase. The readers of Luke, like Luke himself who knew no Hebrew (there is no proof that he did, or that he had the Angels Song before him in any but its Greek form), were not reading the Greek as if it were encoded Hebrew. Who would think of solving a problem in Horace by reference to the Sappho or Anacreon he was translating-imitating? Who would indeed seek the meaning of the LXX by reference to the Hebrew? The term for "soul" underwent change in the translation from the Hebrew. /21 "In classical and post-classical Greek both meanings ["vital force", "seat of spirit/wind"] are connected by the common idea of the soul as an immaterial or at least invisible essential core

of man that can be thought of as distinct from the body. It gives worth and duration to the human self beyond the limits of physical existence. This idea is in every way alien to the OT." /22 The Greek is on its own. What it does not succeed in saying, is just not said. [But of course it was rich and subtle enough to absorb foreign idioms. The Galatians understood Paul's "flesh and blood" (1.16) without being told of the Hebrew idiom]

To find the meaning of Luke 2.14b, the usage of the phraseology, concrete noun with abstract genitive must be registered, in the LXX, the NT and, above all, in Lk/Acts. [Too much attention has been paid to the single word eudokia without reference to its situation in a phrase] Such phrases are common in Hebrew eg "man of bloodshed", meaning a murderer; RSV "man of blood"; KJV "bloody man" - compare "Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial" with the more modern "Begone, begone, you man of blood, you worthless fellow." The construction is described as a genitivus qualitatis - "taking the place of an adjective". /23 This adjectival use is apparent without reference to the Hebrew: LXX Psalm 54 (55), 23 andres haimatōn kai doliotētos (= men of blood and treachery) corresponds to the andra haimatōn kai dolion of Psalm 5.6 (RSV, "men of blood and treachery" ie "bloodthirsty and deceitful men.")

This "adjectival genitive" /24 was freely adopted by NT writers. So the "man of lawlessness" (2 Thess 2.3) becomes "the lawless one" (2 Thess 2.8) This is also Lucan usage. "A horn of salvation" (1.68) is a saving horn - in English, a mighty Saviour. "Knowledge of salvation" (1.77) is salvific knowledge (it is hardly "experience of salvation" ie for John the Baptist). The "spirit of weakness" (13.11) is the weakening spirit ie an infirmity. Luke himself explains the idiom when after the sentence "Make for yourselves friends through the mammon of unrighteousness" (16.9), he writes, "If then you have not been faithful with the unrighteous mammon, who will trust you with the true?" (RSV uses the adjective in both sentences). In 18.6, the "judge of unrighteousness" is the judge who "neither feared God nor regarded man"(v2,4) and therefore "the unrighteous judge" (So RSV for v6) . There

are fewer examples in Acts, where Luke is less tied to tradition; but "gall of bitterness (8.23) ie "bitter gall" and "vessel of election" ((.5) is "choice instrument". Here of course the "election" is God's, but "election" is, so to speak, a reserved word for the divine choice; and, in any case, the sentence leaves no doubt: "He is a vessel of election for me" ie "my chosen instrument.". Our text (Lk 2.14) is considered under the heading genitivus qualitatis /25 as an obvious candidate but switched then to "genitive of belonging, origin" on the strength of the Qumran text. Leaving this aside, we can say that Lucan usage shows that "men of good will" are "well disposed men" just as the "judge of unrighteousness" was the unjust judge.

It is a pity that Hunzinger /26 tried to treat the matter of Luke 2.14 as fuel for denominational controversy when he welcomed Vogt's translation /27 as Catholic exegesis falling in line with the Protestant. Such considerations are out of place in the exegesis of NT texts /28. If Luke did write a phrase with Pelagian overtones, the only legitimate reaction in exegesis would be "too bad". Or, rather, that there is no principle of exegesis which requires Luke to write in the terminology of later orthodoxy, or of debates enunciated only centuries later. "Vobis non adhuc disputantibus, securius loquebantur" as Augustine said to adversaries brandishing old writers at him.

If indeed Luke 2.14 were an example of "early Catholicism" (Frühkatholizismus) which some have held against Luke Acts, it would be extremely early Catholicism, very different eg of the Council of Orange - "If anyone thinks that without the grace of God, when we believe, will, desire, strive, pray, watch, study, beg, seek, knock: mercy is granted to us by God, and does not confess that it is by the inspiration and infusion of the Holy Spirit that we believe, will and all the rest," - anathema sit, (let him be anathema) /29. The Council was making sure that such NT commands as, "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you" (Matt 7.7) should not be seen as making prayer simpliciter as "decisive for salvation" - to use Schrenk's phrase.

In favour of the translation, "men of good will" is,

of course, the fact that it is, or rather was, for over seventeen centuries, in possession. Only totally unimpeachable arguments could dislodge such a title-holder. Then, too little account has recently been made of the testimonial value of the Old Latin text which was made when Greek was still the lingua franca (even in Africa where King Battos of Cyrene had been feted by odes of Pindar). The presumption is that the Old Latin got its translation from the "Greeks" who presumably knew what their Greek meant. But there is possibly an even stronger argument than the Old Latin that the human good will was envisaged universally from the start. It is found in the "Byzantine, Antiochian, Majority" reading: "on earth, among men good will". The poorer reading points to the true meaning.

Only two modern translations come to mind which still leave room for "men of good will" - not an endangered species as long as the Missa Solemnis of Mozart is sung. One such translation is the Gloria of the Mass when said in Irish: "lucht a pháirte" -the people of his party" - either the people who chose God or the people whom God chose, so, just "the people of God", no telling how they got there. It seems deliberately ambiguous ; typical Irish deviousness, some might unkindly say. A modern German translation of Luke 2.14b has it /30 "seine Friede gilt allen auf der Erde // die sich von ihm lieben lassen" = "His peace is for all on earth who let themselves be loved by him". This, however, is commentary rather than translation or even paraphrase. It explains what a man of good will is: one who puts no obstacle in the way of grace. The "men of good will" are acknowledged, their presence felt. The translators do not tread so delicately with Luke 1.50 (miser cordia eius a progenie in progenies timentibus eum = His mercy is upon those who fear him from generation to generation) which is no less deserving of their care - and perhaps a warning from the Council of Orange.

Notes

1. Cf G. Schrenk, "Eudokia", TWNT 2 (1935); TDNT 2 (1964) 742-751, esp. 750.
2. ibid 750
3. DAG (1952) 319-320
4. ibid

5. Cf H. Schürmann, Das Lukasevangelium 1(HTKNT 3/1; Freiburg - Basel - Wien: Herder 1969) 114
6. Gospel of Luke , (Exeter: Paternoster Press 1978) 112
7. op.cit 115, n.146 referring approvingly to H. Braun, Qumran und das NT I, 831
8. Braun, *ibid*
9. E. Vogt, "voluntas dei eligens et praedestinans" Bib 34 (1935) 428
10. Cf I QH 4:23; 11.9; 1Q 34 fr 3 II 5-6 respectively.
11. *ibid*
12. He did not however quote examples; his reference to H. Sahlin, Der Messias u das Gottesvolk (Uppsala 1945) 225 n.4, only shows, when spelled out, that the possessive indicator can be omitted where the whole phrase makes it clear whose good will it is: Ps 68.14 LXX, "the time of good pleasure"; - "my prayer is to thee, O Lord, at an acceptable time (KAIROS EUDOKIAS), O God, in the abundance of thy steadfast love, answer me(RSV). The hour of favour, like the love, is obviously God's. Symmachus: "favour towards the just" (Prov 14.8); "to us and our children favour for ever" (same comment) (Ps Sol 8.33); Test Benj"The beloved of the Lord doing EUDOKIAN" (same comment); "Every man doing what was right in his own eyes" (his human EUDOKIA) (Deut 12.8) was anathema to the OT.
13. E. Hatch & H. Redpath, Concordance to the LXX (Oxford, 1987 reprint 1954) 569
14. Cf E. Lohmeyer, Matthäus, ed. W. Schmauch (Göttingen: Vandenkoeck & Ruprecht 1956) 356
15. J. Dupont, Les Béatitudes (3 vols: Pairs 1973) 3.465
16. *ibid*
17. *ibid*
18. The Idea of History, (Oxford 1946) 56
19. H. Dorrie, "Zur Methodik antiker Exegese" ZNW 64 (1974) 121-138, esp. 136
20. *ibid.* 136
21. A. Dihle, "Psyche", TDNT 9, 616
22. *ibid*
23. F.W. Funk, ed. Greek Grammar of the NT(Cambridge 1961) par 165
24. Cf E. Jay, NT Greek: An Introductory Grammar (SPCK 1958) 269
25. Funk, op.cit.
26. C. Hunzinger, ZNW 44 (1952/53) 85-90
27. *ibid*
28. W. Marxsen, Introduction to the NT (Oxford 1968) 152
29. DS (1965) no.376
30. Die Gute Nachricht(Stuttgart 1971)

There is no doubt that Paul was influenced by the apocalyptic beliefs of his day concerning the end time, and used apocalyptic symbols and terminology, particularly in passages like 1 Thess. 4, II Thess. 2(a) and 1 Cor. 15. Dunn examines I and II Thessalonians and finds them distinctively, though not entirely apocalyptic in tone and content. In 1 Thess. 4-5 the parousia is described in explicitly apocalyptic language as a descending from heaven with archangel and clouds, with a shout and trumpet blast and the resurrection of the dead; it would come without warning, bringing destruction for the unprepared, sudden and terrible, the birth pangs of the new age, and there will be no escape (2). II Thess. also clearly utilizes apocalyptic imagery. In chapter 2, Paul, concerned about apocalyptic enthusiasm getting out of hand, or false ideas of the parousia, reminds his readers that there will be a necessary interval before the End, and the opposition which they were already experiencing must first rise to a climax, with the appearance of the "man of lawlessness". This concept is the Christian equivalent to what is found in Jewish apocalyptic, where the eschatological opposition to God was often represented by a single figure - Satan, a dragon, a tyrant or false prophet hostile to God. In esoteric language, a typical stylistic feature in apocalyptic, Paul outlines how, when "that which restrains" is taken away, the man of lawlessness will take his seat in the temple of God and command worship till Jesus' intervention in judgment. Wenham also, like Dunn, has demonstrated how widespread is Paul's use of apocalyptic in the Thessalonian correspondence. Reference has already been made in ch. 3 to his comparison of I and II Thessalonians with apocalyptic passages in the Synoptics, particularly the Synoptic Apocalypse. He advocates the existence of solid parallels as far as subject matter is concerned, and links, not just at the level of individual sayings, but a common sequence of sayings, pointing to a probable underlying shared tradition (3).

As far as I Corinthians 15 is concerned, it appears that Paul is seeking to counteract a gnosticizing "over realised" eschatology held by some at Corinth. They knew themselves to participate in Christ, who had overcome death and the powers that rule this world. His resurrection power is appropriated to them and they share in the heavenly world of the Spirit. These 'pneumatics' conceived of themselves as enjoying a perfect redemptive state and an unconditional moral freedom, for human actions cannot compromise their mystic bond with Christ (4). In reply, Paul insists that the resurrection of Christ is a proleptic, apocalyptic event, the first fruits of the final resurrection, from which it derives its meaning. It has no simple ideological, isolated or completed meaning and cannot be separated from an apocalyptic world-view. The resurrection of Christ, the coming reign of God, the future resurrection of the dead and the transformation of the created order belong together (v23-28). Far from considering this apocalyptic world-view a husk, or a discardable frame, Paul insists that it lies at the very heart of the gospel and, if separated from it, the gospel itself will be torn apart! (v1-4, 13-19) (5). Paul's Apocalypticism to be Expected.

Paul's fundamental apocalypticism, which we have seen evidenced in the Thessalonican correspondence and I Cor. 15, is to be expected in the light of the prominence apocalyptic appears to have had in the Judaism of his day. This is suggested for example by Hengel, whose claims concerning the strong apocalyptic influence at that time, both in the piety of Palestinian Judaism (even Pharisaic Judaism) and in the Diaspora, have already been noted. (6) Apocalypticism was a buttress against Hellenistic mysticism and mystery religions. Its influence in Pharisaism is supported by the probable derivation of the apocalyptists from the Hasidim, by the numerous messianic eschatological passages in early Jewish prayers and in Targum Jer.I, and also the positive attitude of the Shammaite left-wing towards the Zealot movement (7). Therefore Hengel concludes,

"the fact that both early Pharisaism and the Greek-speaking Diaspora knew an intensive eschatological hope, with a picture of history to match, would finally also explain the apocalyptic foundation of the thought of Paul" (8).

Can Paul be a Pharisaic legalist and an apocalypticist at one and the same time? In the past "Pharisaic Judaism" was played off against "apocalyptic Judaism" as if both constituted distinct parties. Moore (9) depicted first century Judaism along the lines of "normative" Judaism (i.e. the Tannaite tradition after Jamnia (AD 90), when Pharisaism became the norm for Jewish religion) and "extraneous". This division was maintained by Rossler (10), who sees the period in Judaism from the Maccabean rising as being ruled by the two conflicting tendencies of apocalypticism and rabbinism, distinguished by attitudes to the law and history. More recently, however, it has become clear that this radical division can no longer be maintained. Sanders (11), in discussing the subject of apocalypticism and legalism, maintains that they do not contribute substantially different religious types or streams of thought in the Judaism of the period (12). The existence in Qumran of a strongly nomistic group, with a pronounced expectation of an imminent End, should be a major caution against accepting this simple dissection. In agreement with this position, Davies, Rowland and others, have given many examples of apocalyptic symbols in Pharisaism and rabbinic Judaism (13).

Apocalyptic - How Fundamental for Paul?

In a recent major work apocalyptic has been given a central position in Pauline theology. J.C. Beker (14) proposed making a distinction between the coherent centre (the basic core) of Paul's theology and its contextual contingency (the application of the coherent centre in the specific context of the letters). While the apostle has a basic structure of thought from which he will not judge, he is so deeply sensitive to the concrete situation that the basic structure is phrased so that it speaks to that situation. This approach is not new, but Beker's claim as to what comprises the coherent centre of Paul's theology is: it is not Christ-mysticism, or justification by faith but apocalyptic, as informed by

the Christ-event. As he expresses it in his preface, "I posit the triumph of God as the coherent theme of Paul's gospel: that is, the hope in the dawning victory of God and in the imminent redemption of the created order, which he has inaugurated in Christ" (15). Paul is therefore "an apocalyptic theologian with a theocentric outlook" (16). Apocalyptic is the basic core of Paul's theology - eventual apocalyptic triumph, as expressed proleptically in the resurrection of Christ and modified somewhat by the Christ-event itself. In keeping with this understanding, Beker maintains it will not be enough, as Käsemann did, to pay lip service to apocalyptic as "the mother of Christian theology". He had turned apocalyptic into a Pauline antidote to Hellenistic enthusiasm and then fixed on justification by faith as Paul's central theme. Apocalyptic must be given its independent status as a type of thinking which presses into service a wide range of symbols such as righteousness, justification, reconciliation and being in Christ, in order to make its understanding clear. Kasemann's mistake was to confuse one theme with "the" theme(17).

Is apocalyptic to be elevated to the place where it is seen as the coherent centre of Pauline theology? Scroggs(18), in seeking to assess this claim, explains apocalyptic in Paul both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively, the theme claimed to be central must be found in most or all of the documents. While it is clear that apocalyptic is found throughout the literary career of Paul, from the earliest letter (I Thessalonians) to the latest (Philippians), yet Galatians is a glaring omission and does present a real problem. Quantitatively the theme must not just be present, but determinative of all other themes, and here again it is difficult to ascribe this position to apocalyptic in Paul. We must agree with the Scroggs that it is better to see apocalyptic in Paul as part of his basic theological structure, rather than his coherent centre, which is difficult to determine. Again, as we shall see shortly, other themes such as a reign of Christ already begun (I Cor. 15v25), the experience of the "new creation" (II Cor. 5v17), mean that the triumph of God on a cosmic scale is not all that Paul's theology is about.

Apocalyptic in Paul - Only an Early Emphasis?

There are various suggestions concerning Paul's enthusiasm with regard to apocalyptic throughout his career. Anderson maintains that initially Paul's Use of apocalyptic symbols and terminology is "not in doubt"(19). Nevertheless, the view that early apocalyptic hopes, as revealed in I Thessalonians, were subsequently toned down and reorientated towards the individual and his destiny by the time of II Corinthians (see ch.5) "remains a distinct possibility"(20). Mearns (21) proposes the rather unique theory that Paul's early eschatological theology appears to have undergone no less than four radical changes from his conversion until the late forties and early fifties. He finds support for such changes from an exegesis of the Thessalonian letters. First of all, before the Thessalonian correspondence, he suggests that Paul appears to have shared with other Christians an early radical realised eschatology. It was believed that in Jesus' death and resurrection the new aeon had arrived and the new creation had already been formed. The healing powers of the gospel were so powerfully abroad that even death itself might seem to have been overcome, and Christians had passed over the threshold into a life eternal in its quality. Again, eschatological or parousia expectations were probably conceived of as moving their fulfilment in the exaltation of Christ. This realised eschatology, shared with the Thessalonians in Paul's early ministry among them, was called into question when believers started to die and the end of the present world-order failed to occur. Also, a corrective to over-enthusiasm among those who accepted the realised eschatological position became necessary. Paul answers this anxiety about the deceased, and the dangerously inflated conclusions about the present enjoyment of the kingdom of God, by reconceptualizing the parousia in the form of a "second coming", together with a final resurrection (1Thess.4v13ff). Thus, in I Thessalonians he modifies his earlier teaching and comes to the second phase of his Christian eschatology, approaching it cautiously in ch.1 until the "oracle of the Lord" is revealed in ch.4. A third stage in his eschatological viewpoint is reached in II Thessalonians. The teaching

of the imminent Day of the Lord needed to be modified and so, between I and II Thessalonians, Paul moved swiftly to introduce a "signs scheme", which must occur before the last day(22). This scheme served the purpose of checking the enthusiastic excesses of an extreme imminentist hope. Finally, the fourth factor which converged with the other three to produce the complete revolution in Paul's early eschatology, was the development, from the stock of apocalyptic, of a Christian anti-Messiah symbol, out of the excitement generated by the Caligula episode and the attempt to set up an image in the temple.

In response to Mearns, we can acknowledge that he has clearly highlighted an important factor which may have led to the development of Paul's thought in new directions. Rather than the theory of gradual development, new insights appears to have been gained in facing different situations and challenges. Yet it is difficult to find the radical changes Mearns claims took place in Paul's eschatological viewpoint in the Thessalonian correspondence. Before the letters were penned, could Paul's understanding and that of the Thessalonian believers be described as an overrealized eschatology? Would that understanding not be better defined as simply an over-enthusiasm, because of an emphasis on the imminence of the parousia, an enthusiasm which persisted in spite of the first warning? (cf. 1 Thess. 4v11 and II Thess. 3v10). Again, ch.5v1 claims that the Thessalonians had a clear apocalyptic-type conception of the day of the Lord before the writing of the first epistle, rather than a realized understanding. I Thess. 4 does not suggest that Paul had given no teaching to them about the parousia earlier, but simply that the question of the position of believers who had died, in relation to that coming, had not been made clear. Again, Paul's teaching on the parousia in I Thessalonians is not introduced gradually and gently (as Mearns suggested), because it reflected a change of mind, but is clearly stated from the first,(1v10). The different emphases said to be present in I and II Thessalonians concerning an unexpected parousia and a parousia with signs, do not point to a change of view by Paul. Bruce has insisted that we find the same

ambivalence in the eschatological teaching of Jesus and the Synoptic gospels (23). Also, the unexpected nature of the parousia is not as complete in I Thessalonians as some would suggest. Chapter 5 does remind us that it will overtake the ungodly man without warning, but believers being children of light be awake and prepared for it (24).

Beker has pointed out that apocalyptic is not just present in Paul's early writings, but is found right throughout his literary career. This does not mean that there may be a different emphasis in certain earlier and later works because of changing circumstances. Bruce (25) has suggested that I Thessalonians was written at a time when Paul was aware of the changing situation in the Roman empire. Mounting unrest in Judea, his own unfortunate experience at Thessalonica and elsewhere, news of the expulsion of Jews from Rome appeared to point to the fact that, while Roman law and order were still in control of affairs, it was only too clear that the "hidden power of lawlessness" was already at work and would probably soon sweep all before it. Gallio's encouraging judgment at Corinth a few months later (26) may have led to a modification of this viewpoint. Yet, while it is true that in later letters he does not always express himself in the apocalyptic terms of the Thessalonian correspondence, there is no radical change of viewpoint and very much the same perspective can be seen in the maturity of his letter to the Romans (27).

Paul's Modification of Apocalyptic

The question of Paul's handling of apocalyptic has been variously assessed. Anderson, for example, while acknowledging Paul's participation in the Jewish apocalyptic heritage maintained, The apocalyptic 'tendency' in the apostle is in fact clearly refined by the specifically Christian understanding of existence, for which the 'new creation' or the 'new man' has already become a reality through the redemptive death of Christ" (28). Audet claims that, although Paul was influenced by the apocalyptic current, he is very reticent towards apocalyptic speculation. "Moreover he has transformed several apocalyptic schema into a soteriology where the realized eschatology holds an important place" (29)

Sanders suggests that the similarity between Paul's view and apocalypticism is general rather than detailed. Paul did not calculate the times and the seasons, he did not couch his predictions of the end in visions involving beasts, and he observed none of the literary conventions of apocalyptic literature. Therefore, since the conventions of apocalyptic had so little influence upon him, the hypothesis might be put forward that before his conversion and call Paul was not especially apocalyptically orientated. This view has relevance for an assessment of Paul's handling of apocalyptic concepts, because it means, for Sanders, that Paul did not begin with a set apocalyptic view and fitted Christ into it (30).

How then shall we evaluate apocalyptic in Paul? Certainly we can agree with Dunn (31), who in discussing Paul's Thessalonian correspondence, claims that distinctively Christian features have clearly emerged. We notice particularly that the divine agent who will bring about the end is identified with Jesus. This, for Dunn, marks Christian apocalyptic off from Jewish apocalyptic, where the same obscurity surrounds the apocalypticist's vision of the agent of God as surrounds his vision of the opponents of God. Again, while in Paul's early letters there is not the same note of realized eschatology - the expectation of an imminent parousia appears to have drowned its note - this emphasis comes steadily to the fore in later works. Also the same cautionary note found in Jesus' preaching is present here as well: the *κατεχον* is still operative; the flood of end-time evil and tribulation is still quite a way short of its peak - compare "the end is not yet" of Mark 13.

Ladd, in an article on "Apocalyptic and New Testament Theology" (32), suggested that the Jewish apocalypticists lost the prophetic view of the reality of God acting in history. God was conceived of as having abandoned His world and human history until the end of the age (33). This loss was recovered in the New Testament, where history is again understood to be the scene of the conflict between the kingdom of God and the powers of evil. In the Synoptics the kingdom is presented as

having invaded history, to bring to men living in the old age the blessing of the age to come. This "historizing of eschatology" is found also in Paul's teaching about the resurrection, justification and the Spirit. Christ's resurrection is the first fruits of the eschatological resurrection (1 Cor. 15v23) and justification, essentially the sentence of righteousness by the divine judge in the eschatological day of judgment, has already been announced by God (Rom.3v24). The gift of the Spirit is the eschatological promise of the Spirit, fulfilled in history to those who believe (Joel 2v28-29). Paul calls the gift both "the first fruits" (Rom. 8v23) and a "guarantee" (II Cor. 1v22, 5v5) of the eschatological fullness (34). While not everyone would agree with Ladd that the apocalypticists have so completely abandoned history, his outline of Paul's modification of the apocalyptic view, because of the Christ-event, is helpful.

Beker's understanding of Paul and his theology also merits serious consideration (35). In his major work mentioned earlier, he maintains that Paul's apocalyptic conviction was not initiated by his conversion to Christ, but formed the background of his Pharisaic world-view. The discontinuity between Paul the Pharisee and Paul the Christian lies in a different posture toward the relationship between the Torah and the Messianic promises. Beker is convinced that apocalyptic was not a peripheral curiosity for Paul, but was the central climate and focus of his thought, as it was for most early Christian thinkers. His gospel was formulated within the basic components of apocalyptic thinking. Yet Beker does admit that apocalyptic has undergone a profound modification in Paul because of the Christ-event(36). Paul does not employ, to any extent, the traditional apocalyptic terminology. He does not engage in apocalyptic time-tables, or delight in descriptions of the architecture of heaven and the bliss of the redeemed, or the torture of the wicked. This reduction of apocalyptic terminology and the absence of apocalyptic speculation signifies that the Christ-event has strongly modified the dualistic structure of normal apocalyptic thought. Although death is "the last enemy" (I Cor. 15v26), Paul strongly emphasises both the openness of the

present to the future glory of God and the incursion of the future into the present. "No apocalypse ever posits the intimacy of communion in 'this age' between God and 'Abba' and the believers as His 'children' and and 'sons' (Gal. 4v6, Rom. 8v15). The age is already present, so the Christian can already rejoice, can already claim 'the new creation' and can already live in the power of the spirit" (37). In addition, although Paul adopts the contrast of "the sufferings of the present time", verses "the coming glory" from Jewish apocalyptic (Rom. 8v18), he modifies the doctrine of the messianic woes. Christians do not simply "endure" the sufferings of the end-time, or "wait" for God's new age; they rather "rejoice" in sufferings (Rom. 5v3), because God's power is already manifest in the midst of suffering. Also, the reason for Paul's sparing use of the terminology of "kingdom of God" is because of the proleptic presence of the new in the old. Finally, Beker claims that the intensity of Paul's apocalyptic religion is characterized by hope, not a Bultmanian hope (38), which is simply a component of faith, but hope with a specific object, and hope in a coming reality, i.e. the reality of glory which the Christ-event has opened up for the future (Rom. 8v18-30, cf. Col 1v27). His resurrection has marked the beginning of the process of transformation.

Beker's approach perhaps needs to be tempered by reminding ourselves, as Anderson does, that while Paul's life and thought are directed towards the consummation God would bring in the (near) future, apocalyptic expectation is surely not the whole of Paul (39). Nevertheless, the apocalyptic view does play a fundamental part in Paul's thought and his modification of it in the light of the Christ-event is not such a modification that it is demythologized into existential self-understanding (40) or dismantled in terms of a psychological development of his thought (42), but still retains the reality of its expectation.

NOTES

1. In this chapter the Pauline authorship of II Thessalonians is assumed. For a useful discussion of this question see F.F. Bruce, "St. Paul in Macedonia", BJRL, Vol.62 (1978-80), pp.328ff.
2. Dunn, Unity and Diversity, pp.325ff.

3. Wenham, "Paul and the Synoptic Apocalypse", p.345ff.
See ch. 3 p.82f.
4. J.C. Beker, Paul The Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought, (Edinburgh, 1980), pp.164ff.
5. Ibid., pp.166f.
6. See ch. 2. p.46, Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism, pp.252-254.
Its influence in the Diaspora is evidenced by the Jewish sibyllines, the Slavonic book of Enoch and the translation of many apocalyptic works into Greek.
7. Ibid., p.253.
8. Ibid., p.254.
9. G.F. Moore, Judaism Vol.I, 1932, p.125.
10. D. Rössler, Gesetz und Geschichte, (Neukirchen, 1960).
Rössler's views are outlined, for example in Beker, op.cit., p.137, Koch, op.cit., pp.40f.
11. E.P.S. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, (London, 1977), pp.423ff.
12. Sanders does not deny that some Jews were more concerned with apocalyptic expectation than others, but that in itself does not mean that they should be constituted a distinct religious type.
13. W.D. Davies, "Apocalyptic and Pharisaism" in Christian Origins in Judaism, (London, 1962), pp.19ff. Cf. Rowland, The Open Heaven, pp.29-37, 269ff. Also cf. Saldarini's articles "Apocalyptic and Rabbinic Literature", CBQ, 37 (1975), pp.348ff. and for continuing interest albeit less intense, "The Uses of Apocalyptic in the Mishna and Tosefta", CBQ, 39 (1977), pp.396ff mentioned on p.23, n.62.
14. Beker, op.cit., pp.11ff. 15. Ibid., p.IX. 16. Ibid., p.362.
17. See R.P. Martin, RV of Beker, JBL. 101, No 3 (1982), p.463.
18. R. Scroggs, "Apocalyptic" as the centre of Paul's Gospel" RV p.74-77 in Interpretation. 36, No. 1(1982), pp.74ff.
19. Anderson, "A future for Apocalyptic" p.65.
20. Ibid., p.65.
21. C.L. Mearns, "Early Eschatological Development in Paul: The Evidence of I and II Thessalonians" NTS, 27 (Ap.1981), No. 3 pp.137-157.
22. Ibid., p.157. 23. F.F. Bruce, "St. Paul in Macedonia", p.342
24. Ch. 5 v 1-11. 25. Op. cit., pp.344ff. 26. Acts 18v14-16.
27. Ch. 13v11-13, and this following a very positive assessment of "the governing authorities" in v 1-7.
28. Anderson, A Future, p.65.
29. Audet, "L'influence de l'apocalyptique sur la pensee de Jesus et de l'eglise primitive", Science et Esprit, XXV, (1973)p.51.
30. Sanders, op.cit., p.543f. 31. Dunn, Unity and Diversity, p328f
32. G.E. Ladd, "Apocalyptic and New Testament Theology", Reconciliation and Hope Essays Presented to L. Morris, (Exeter, 1974), pp.275-284.
33. As an example of this pessimism with regard to history, Ladd makes reference to the Dream Vision of Enoch. God was presented as having personally guided the experience of Israel until the Babylonian captivity. Then God withdrew His personal leadership and eventually turned the fortunes of the nation over to 70

33. shepherds, who were self-willed and faithless and fearful evils befell the people while God remained unmoved. Therefore, between the years 586-165BC God is conceived to be inactive in the fortunes of Israel and no deliverance could be expected before the messianic era.
34. Ladd, op.cit., p.294f.
35. Beker, op.cit., pp.144ff.
36. Ibid., p.145.
37. Ibid., p.145.
38. Ibid., p.147
39. Anderson, p.65.
40. R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, (New York, 1951-1955), pp.185-352.
41. H.G. Conzelmann, "On the Analysis of the Confessional Formula in I Cor.15: 3-5" Int. 20 (1966), pp.15-25.
42. C.H. Dodd, New Testament Studies, (New York, 1954), pp.67-128.

Joyce G. Baldwin: The Message of Genesis 12 - 50,
from Abraham to Joseph.
The Bible Speaks Today, I.V.P., 1986, pp224.

The Message of Genesis 12 - 50 is a further volume in the series 'The Bible Speaks Today'. The series has a threefold ideal: 'to expound the biblical text with accuracy, to relate it to contemporary life and to be readable'. The author too in her preface hopes and prays 'that Genesis will indeed speak, not only to those who already know the patriarchs well, but also to those who are still making their acquaintance'. This ideal, hope and prayer has surely been furthered by this commentary.

While from the outset the intention is not that this should be a critical study the introduction does deal briefly yet informatively with the dating of the patriarchs and places them between the 21st and 19th centuries B.C. In the comments on the ratification of the Abrahamic covenant the two accounts are seen as separate and complementary rather than the result of various sources; chapter 15 is private and personal to Abraham whereas chapter 17 relates to a public ceremony. Lack of critical discussion is summed up by the author when she writes 'the book of Genesis itself is of greatest value, and a study of it, as opposed to writing about it, remains a pearl of great price.... it deserves to be read again and again.' However from the ample supply of footnotes and much archaeological evidence one is left in no doubt that scholarship marks this commentary at every stage and gives the reader confidence in the author's credentials and also provides diverse tools for further study.

Throughout the exposition great heed is paid to the biblical and historical context and because of the serious attempt to let the Bible speak the reader is drawn into the life and times of the patriarchs and their families. The commentary has plenty of practical application and the eternal nature of the covenant is emphasised throughout and its Christian implications drawn out. The explanation of the ritual involved in covenant making (chapter 15) and the notes on the destiny

of the twelve tribes (chapter 49) are particularly helpful. Miss Baldwin makes Genesis 12 - 50 speak from its own culture and time to everyday life in the 20th century. Her efforts are extremely readable and the book is well presented. This commentary is not for those who want to exhaust the critical problems of Genesis but for those who want to hear what the patriarchs are saying to us today.

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Pheme Perkins: Resurrection: New Testament Witness and Contemporary Reflection. Geoffrey Chapman, 1985. 504 pages. £19.95.

The Jewish leaders were divided about it; the smart Greeks at Athens laughed at it; yet, for St. Paul, it was at the heart of his preaching. How do the sophisticated sceptics of today re-act to the same message - still basic to Christianity? This new book on resurrection presents the material for an answer.

The first thing to note about it is its title, Resurrection (not simply the resurrection of Jesus), indicating the broadest approach to the subject, ranging from the ideas of late Judaism through the witness of the early Christian documents to the modern quest for meaning in life and death. The second thing is that the author is a woman, one of a growing number of feminine biblical scholars in America who today have broken into what was a male preserve until recent times. Not that this means a radical feminist approach (though there is a hint of this here and there in the book), or any weakness in scholarship. The author's credentials are impressive, and she has several scriptural books to her credit already. This present one is a thoroughly researched work by an established exegete who uses all the recognised methodologies and has studied all the relevant material on her subject.

From a survey of Jewish ideas and attitudes about resurrection and after-life (reflected in the late apocalyptic literature) she goes on to examine the texts in the New Testament, particularly the narratives of the resurrection of Jesus in the four Gospels, using both Form and Redaction Criticism to analyze each in turn. She pays due attention to the identification of literary forms and their interpretation, specifically the precise genre of those resurrection stories in the Gospels. Her conclusions are cautiously expressed, but on the whole positive, for instance with regard to the credibility of the empty-tomb stories (with a nod to the presence of women as witnesses!). Broadening our view of resurrection, and the resurrection of Jesus, other related chapters examine the word 'resurrection' as apostolic commission (How far did the resurrection-of-Jesus stories express the commissioning of its official witnesses?), as kerygma (Are the stories an imaginative expansion of the kerygma?), as presence (Are they a way of showing how Jesus, the risen Lord, was still present in his Church?).

Later chapters carry the survey to the early Christian (apostolic and postapostolic) writings, as well as the apocryphal and Gnostic writings of the same period, debating the problem of the resurrection of the body which has been so forcefully set out by St. Paul in

I Corinthians 15.

Finally, the author attempts (rather too briefly it must be said) a summing-up of modern, contemporary reactions to the whole problem of life after death and the Christian answer to it in the doctrine of resurrection in general and the resurrection of Jesus in particular.

The most valuable aspect of this extensive work is that it surveys the whole field, combining an overview of up-to-date biblical scholarship with the author's own expertise in presenting the results. This makes it an essential reference book on its subject.

Some particular examples of Dr. Perkin's approach may be cited. She stresses the importance of understanding resurrection language and symbolism (e.g. in the way it was used to express the Christian understanding of union with the risen Christ). She looks at the imagery used in presenting resurrection (How far was it borrowed from Jewish tradition; how far influenced by apocalyptic ideas and writings?). In keeping with modern biblical methodology she focusses attention on the meaning of narrative in the Gospels, specifically the stories of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. This involves an examination of how the basic Gospel tradition has been handled by the different author/redactors (e.g. how Matthew has framed his account of the resurrection to emphasise the commissioning of the apostles); how the Johannine handling of the tradition differs from the Lucan one; how John's narrative of the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene (again the feminine touch!) brings out the full implication of his glorification (i.e. its completion in Passion, Resurrection and anticipated Ascension); or how the resurrection of Jesus is seen as past event (best brought out by Luke) and also as present experience in the community of believers. Enough has been said, perhaps, to indicate the wide range of this study and the depth of its treatment of the textual witness to resurrection both within and without the Christian tradition. Dr. Perkins has compressed an impressive array of scholarship into her book and has drawn judiciously on the work of other scholars (as the extensive notes at the ends of the chapters testify).

All this does not make for easy reading: for one thing it presupposes the reader's acquaintance with modern biblical scholarship and its terminology; for another the author's own style is somewhat oblique and her argument not always easy to follow. The book demands re-reading, but it will reward it.

It is very well produced and fully equipped with bibliography and index so that it can be recommended on all counts, especially (for many would-be readers) if it should appear in cheaper format.

Parochial House
Dunamaggan, Kilkenny

Joseph Brennan, D.D.,
L.S.S.

Thomas W. Overholt: Prophecy in Cross-Cultural Perspective -
 A Sourcebook for Biblical Researchers.
 SBL Sources for Biblical Study No. 17.
 Scholars Press, Atlanta, Ga. 1986.

In the study of any Old Testament prophet one wants to ask a number of questions regarding how he was recognised as an authority, what enabled the message to be formulated, what, if any, body of followers had to be engaged in the spread and persistence of the tradition developed, etc. In a small commentary on ISAIAH, in 1964, G. Ernest Wright wrote: "How were the words of the prophets preserved: This is a question on which we have far too little information." The book under review may lay claim to supplying some of the information essential for prophetic studies by tapping the rich vein of resources now available in anthropological studies of prophetic or cult figures and the traditions they established. This is what constitutes "a cross-cultural perspective." Himself an Old Testament scholar, Overholt had the advantage, denied to most of his kind, of extended studies of the findings of the anthropologists related to this field. He was in a position to discover, assess and evaluate texts derived from several centuries of traditions, in the Americas, Africa, the Arctic, India and the Pacific. A carefully documented bibliography of twenty pages will open up for those, whose interest is awakened, plenty of material to be consulted for possible parallels within their own chosen areas of study.

This access route is important since the academic speciality of biblical scholars and that of the anthropology must make demands on their respective devotees that rule out real inter-disciplinary expertise. Those who can create a bridge, such as this book provides, must be welcomed and it is because Overholt wants to place as much material as possible in the hands of his fellow-biblical students that he may be excused from applying his texts in anthropology to specific biblical prophets or their varying times and messages. Those who study these texts should be able to find from the descriptions of the patterns and cultic pursuits enough to enable them, with informed imagination, to develop around their own objects of study what may help to explain for example how a prophet was 'called' and equipped for the role to be filled. The term "prophet" is at home in Jewish, Christian and Islamic studies, but not in other world religions and cults. Therefore our author chooses a neutral term - "intermediary" - to cover the identity of the "shamans", "spirit-mediums", "diviners", "prophets" and such figures. In order to make his texts more intelligible and explicit he inserts marginal notes which are in accord with a scheme in which the three main aspects of any intermediary are viewed:

- (i) The Making of the intermediary - how his role has been assumed, what formal initiation or instruction has been registered, the evaluation by any groups and acceptance or rejection of the figure;
- (ii) Behavioural Characteristics of the intermediary - costume worn, patterns of performance, group participation, evaluation, etc.
- (iii) Social Functions of the intermediary - upholding the established social order or encouraging social change, diagnosing/curing illnesses, etc. This system of annotation is typical of the capable handling by our author of all his material and provides a good introduction and useful guide to the three hundred pages of detailed anthropological texts.

He has a valuable short chapter on the sociology of storytelling and the transmission and preserving of the message of prophet-like cult figures and intermediaries. In this he deals with such questions as: How are stories preserved? Who tells the stories? How are the stories told? On what occasions are the stories told? Why are they told? and what is the relationship of the stories to the wider life of the community?

There is an interesting and illuminating case study taken from the rise of a "new religion" among the Seneca tribe of North American Indians in the first quarter of last century - the "Handsome Lake" influences. The whole thrust of Overholt's book is to point up the need for treating prophetic utterances and activities in the Old Testament as cases in which real persons are at work and speaking to real circumstances meeting the responses of real people around them and depending upon real people to transmit their message through which the Lord God may be heard. The sociology of all branches of knowledge requires such an approach to study. It calls in question too much attention to written forms as the medium of transmission as if no other medium were necessary. Overholt is in no way brash about his positive contribution to Old Testament studies. "The question is, can we learn anything new about the Old Testament from our comparative materials? Can we ever feel confident that such studies have actually filled in gaps in our knowledge about the social world of the Old Testament?" He acknowledges that these are difficult questions partly because of the variability among cultures, but also partly because the study of the bible takes place, mainly, within the believing community, holding to the uniqueness of the Bible's revelation, and therefore resisting straightforward comparisons with writings of other religious faiths. He feels that progress will take place so long as attempts are made with due knowledge of these factors and wise caution in actually using the tools being fashioned in this way. We wish his movement well.

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Del Ratzsch: Philosophy of Science - The Natural Sciences in Christian Perspective. IVP 1986. 133pp text; 13pp notes and bibliography. £3.50

In the opening paragraph of the preface the author displays a sense of humour relevant to the subject. This is an encouragement to Christians to read a book which deals with what is to many believers a contentious subject. He continues: "We live in a world deeply influenced by science...the very way we conceive of the world has been deeply altered by science....Science has been hailed as finally bringing light to the human race after dark unenlightened ages....We need to know whether this light bearing down upon us is really a lamp to our feet or the headlights of an onrushing truck." And so the author aims to consider "what natural science is, what it can do, how and why it works and what it cannot do." Chapters 1-6 deal with these questions.

Chapter 1 deals with aspects of natural science and proposes a definition. But science has its presuppositions, e.g., that nature is

uniform. Del Ratzsch claims that "although these presuppositions are widely accepted, the metaphysical systems which originally supported them are not." (p.17) Also, without the presupposition of the personal creator God, characteristics of nature, such as objectivity and rationality, remain unsubstantiated presuppositions of science.

Chapter 2, "The Traditional Conception of Science", reviews science from the 17th to the 20th centuries, and notes the decline of the traditional view. Ratzsch points out that "the philosophy of science in the sixties" (chapter 3) has undergone a revolution; the theories of relativity and quantum mechanics have demonstrated a connection between scientists and their understanding of nature. "The most influential movement within philosophy of science in the 60s and 70s was built around the general idea that various mental facets of human beings affected not only what a person actually and truly perceived, but even to some extent the reality which was being perceived." (p.43) Here Ratzsch introduces the reader to the work of Thomas Kuhn. Kuhn started his academic career as a physicist, turned his attention to the philosophy of science and, in 1962, published his views in "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions." According to Kuhn (according to Ratzsch) scientists try to account for phenomena in terms dictated by the paradigm current to any particular time. One of the factors of a paradigm is a metaphysical commitment. When scientific investigation produces anomalies so numerous, or central to the paradigm, that they cannot be ignored, then a crisis occurs, which may lead to a new paradigm. This is Kuhn's view of scientific revolution. He has a wholistic view of the universe, that is to say, according to Ratzsch, that the component parts "melt into such a unity that even the nature of the parts themselves is affected by that unity". (p.49) Perception is an active process, as Kant postulated. Thus the paradigms we accept affect our perception. Paradigms are incommensurable one with another, and each may be rational. Choice of one rather than another is made by a value judgment, in Kuhn's peculiar sense of this phrase. Truth in science is relative to a particular paradigm. Thus humans are placed "firmly in the center of science". (p.55)

Ratzsch notes that Kuhn's views would make communication between scientists who hold different paradigms impossible, and all truth would be relative. He queries this subjectivity and also the incommensurability of paradigms and concludes this chapter: "Contemporary philosophy of science has been searching for some middle ground where reason, observation and objectivity have an appropriate place, but where the human factor is at least that - a factor." (P.61)

In the light of this conclusion, the next chapter considers "The Contemporary Situation" of "Empirical Data", of "Objectivity" and of "Rationality". The following two chapters investigate the consequences of this philosophy of science for its competence and its limitations. The intellectual light of the book shines forth from the chapter (3) on the Philosophy of Science in the Sixties"; this is focussed through "The Contemporary Situation" (chapter 4) and shows where science may and may not go (chapters 5 and 6). To me the value of the book as Philosophy of Science (main title) decreased in the remaining chapters. "Scientific Challenges to Christian Belief" (chapter 7) are impossible, given "The Limitations of Science" (chapter 6). "Christianity and Scientific Pursuits" (chapter 8) is a justification of Christians working in the fields of natural science and a moral guide to them

therein. The final chapter considers the truth embedded in the Bible where statements relate to natural science. These chapters are relevant to "The Natural Sciences in Christian Perspective"; it is questionable if they are relevant to "Philosophy of Science". This title, in large letters on the cover and repeated on the title page, is somewhat misleading. Nevertheless, Ratzsch has given us a very helpful book. It would have been more helpful if he had given more examples (a) of paradigms (only Newton's is described); (b) of scientific revolutions (only the relationship of observer and observed is mentioned); of distinct theories "which can explain any given body of data" (p.93) (none is named -cf. Prof. Wolpert's challenge that people should name even two such theories in relation to genetics, in summary of his lecture in the Guardian 24.12.86.) In general the book is clearly written but some paragraphs could be clearer (e.g. main para. p.99 and 2nd new para.p.145). Split infinitives are sprinkled throughout the book. The most important fault is the omission of an index - serious in a book of this kind. A paragraph heading at the beginning of p.105 would have been helpful. Despite these criticisms, the book is worth its price as an introduction to this subject for hesitant Christians, for, in the light of the contemporary situation, "prohibitions on Christians taking what God has said as part of the landscape on which their science is erected surely require justification". (p.149) The difficulty, which Ratzsch expounds in the final chapter, is to understand "what God has said" in the field of natural science!

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